

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 are the claims currently pending in the Application.

Formal Matters

1. The Examiner objects to claims 1-3 for containing numbers in parenthesis. The claims are amended to delete these numbers. This is not a narrowing amendment.
2. The Examiner did not acknowledge review and consideration of the references cited in the Information Disclosure Statement filed February 19, 2002. The Examiner is respectfully requested to review and to consider these references and to acknowledge same. The relevance of these references was described in the Specification (pages 1-3).
3. Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging the claim for foreign priority and the receipt of the priority document.

Rejection of Claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by Salabaschew, U.S. Publication No. 2001/0041559. This rejection is traversed.

The present Application claims priority from Japanese Patent Application 360288/2000, filed in Japan on November 27, 2000. The Salabaschew reference was filed in the United States on December 27, 2000. Therefore, Salabaschew is antedated by the present Application's priority document, which fully supports the claims.

Filed herewith is a certified English-language translation of the Japanese priority document, JP Patent Application 360288/2000, and thereby Applicant hereby perfects priority. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that Salabaschew be removed as a reference against the present Application.

Filed herewith is a Petition for an Extension of Time, with fee, for a one-month extension.

For at least the reasons set forth in the foregoing discussion, Applicant believes that the Application is now allowable and respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider the rejections and allow the Application. Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this Amendment or the Application generally, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,


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Encl. – Certified English-language translation of Japanese Patent No. 360288/2000